IN THE CLAIMS

Please amend the claims as follows:

Claim 1 (Currently Amended): A system for transmitting messages over a multimedia network from a sending client to a target client, the messages comprising target client information, the system comprising:

a plurality of message gateways, each message gateway being configured to receive and transmit over at least one dedicated transfer medium, and

a message broker connected to the message gateways and being provided with a client database,

wherein a first message gateway receives a message from a sending client over a first transfer medium and transmits the message or information extracted thereof to the message broker, the message broker changes an originator identification included in the message received from the sending client to a unique and anonymous alias identification and automatically selects an appropriate second transfer medium depending on content of the client database and the message or information extracted thereof, and the message is sent to the target client via a second message gateway configured to transmit over the second transfer medium selected by the message broker ~~in a first format from a sending client over a first transfer medium and transmits the message and/or an information extracted thereof to the message broker, the message broker automatically selects an appropriate second transfer medium depending on the content of the client database and supplied message and/or information extracted thereof, and the message is sent in a second format to the target client by means of a second message gateway configured for a transmission over the second transfer medium selected by the message broker, and~~

~~wherein messages include meta information containing a plurality of different fields, said meta information including a secure read count value indicating the current number of~~

~~times the message has been read and a maximum read count value limiting the maximum reads of the message,~~

~~wherein the message broker controls the message flow by inspecting the meta information of the messages~~.

Claim 2 (Previously Presented): The system according to claim 1, wherein a common internal message format is used for the communication respectively between the message broker and the message gateways.

Claim 3 (Previously Presented): The system according to claim 1, wherein the message gateways are distributed over the network.

Claim 4 (Previously Presented): The system according to claim 1, wherein the transfer media comprise analog and digital transfer media.

Claim 5 (Previously Presented): The system according to claim 1, further comprising:

at least one message processor provided between the first and the second message gateway for further processing the content of the message to be transmitted.

Claim 6 (Previously Presented): The system according to claim 1, wherein the client database comprises addresses of clients, client preferences and/or characteristics of the transfer network to the corresponding target client.

Claim 7 (Previously Presented): The system according to claim 1, wherein the message broker is designed to furthermore perform processing control and/or security processing.

Claim 8 (Previously Presented): The system according to claim 1, wherein the message broker is designed to furthermore perform accounting and/or billing.

Claim 9 (Previously Presented): The system according to claim 1, wherein a plurality of message brokers is provided.

Claim 10 (Previously Presented): The system according to claim 9, wherein at least one message broker is connected with a client database with reduced capacity.

Claim 11 (Previously Presented): The system according to claim 1, wherein the messages respectively contain a non-granted encrypted and a granted non-encrypted part.

Claim 12 (Currently Amended): A message broker unit for a distributed multimedia system, wherein the unit is designed to autonomously select an appropriate transfer medium out of a plurality of transfer media for messages received from a sending client and to be transferred to a target client, wherein the message broker unit is connected to a client database and the transfer medium selection is performed depending on target client information and content of the client database, and the message broker unit changes an originator identification comprised in a respective message received from the sending client to a unique and anonymous alias identification ~~in a first format from a sending client and to be transferred to a target client in a second format, wherein the message broker is connected~~

~~to a client database and the transfer medium selection is performed depending on target client information and the content of the client database,~~

~~wherein messages include meta information containing a plurality of different fields, said meta information including a secure read count value indicating the current number of times the message has been read and a maximum read count value limiting the maximum reads of the message,~~

~~wherein the message broker controls the message flow by inspecting the meta information of the messages~~.

Claim 13 (Previously Presented): The message broker unit according to claim 12, wherein the transfer medium selection is performed depending on the target network, the message type and/or client preferences contained in the client database.

Claim 14 (Previously Presented): The message broker according to claim 12, wherein the messages respectively contain a non-granted encrypted and a granted non-encrypted part.

Claim 15 (Currently Amended): A method for sending messages over a multimedia network from a sending client to a target client, the messages comprising target client information, the method comprising the following steps:

transmitting the message in a first format from the sending client to a message broker over a first transfer medium, and

transmitting the message in a second format to the target client over a second transfer medium, wherein the second transfer medium can be identical to the first transfer medium,

wherein the message broker changes an originator identification included in the message client to a unique and anonymous alias identification and selects an appropriate

second transfer medium out of a plurality of transfer media depending on content of a client database connected to the message broker and the target client information ~~selects an appropriate second transfer medium out of a plurality of transfer media depending on the content of a client database connected to the message broker and the target client information,~~

~~wherein messages include meta information containing a plurality of different fields, said meta information including a secure read count value indicating the current number of times the message has been read and a maximum read count value limiting the maximum reads of the message,~~

~~wherein the message broker controls the message flow by inspecting the meta information of the messages~~.

Claim 16 (Previously Presented): The method according to claim 15, wherein the transmission of the message from the sending client to the target client is performed essentially in real-time.

Claim 17 (Previously Presented): The method according to claim 15, wherein a conversion from the first transfer medium to the second transfer medium is performed depending on the target network, the message type and/or client preferences contained in the client database.

Claim 18 (Previously Presented): The method according to claim 15, wherein before the transmission to the target client, the content of the message is further processed by digital signing, encryption, watermarking and/or language translation.

Claim 19 (Previously Presented): The method according to claim 15, wherein a lifetime is attributed to each message and the message is only transmitted until the expiration of the lifetime.

Claim 20 (Previously Presented): The method according to claim 15, wherein the messages respectively contain a non-granted encrypted and a granted non-encrypted part.

Claim 21 (Currently Amended): A computer readable medium including computer executable instructions, wherein the instructions, when executed by a processor, cause the processor to perform ~~software program product, wherein when loaded into a computer, the product implements~~ a method according to claim 15.